



SOUTHEAST IDAHO

BANNOCK, BEAR LAKE, BINGHAM, CARIBOU, FRANKLIN, ONEIDA, & POWER COUNTIES

LABOR FORCE & EMPLOYMENT

Seasonally related employment fluctuations drove the Pocatello Metropolitan Statistical Area's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate up from 4.5 percent in November 2000 to 4.6 percent in December 2000. From November to December, the number of employed dropped by 120 individuals.

From one year ago, the change was also minimal. The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate decreased one-tenth of a percentage point from 4.7 percent in December 1999 to 4.6 percent in December 2000. From December 1999 to December 2000, the number of individuals in the *Civilian Labor Force* and the number of individuals employed both grew by 520, leaving little change in the unemployment rate over the year.

The unemployment rate in Southeast Idaho counties rose in December 2000 over November 2000. Southeast Idaho Table 2 shows that Caribou County and Power County had the highest unemployment rates in December 2000, and Franklin County had the lowest unemployment rate. Both Caribou and Power County experienced a rise in the number of unemployed individuals in December. Seasonal adjustments likely influenced the unemployment rates from December 1999 to December 2000 because of a colder winter this year over last year. From December 1999, every county experienced an increased unemployment rate, except Ban-

Southeast Idaho Table 1: Labor Force & Employment
Pocatello City MSA (Bannock County)

	Dec 2000*	Nov 2000	Dec 1999	% Change From Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
Seasonally Adjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	41,320	41,390	40,800	-0.2%	1.3%
Unemployment	1,900	1,850	1,900	2.7%	0.0%
% of Labor Force Unemployed	4.6	4.5	4.7		
Total Employment	39,420	39,540	38,900	-0.3%	1.3%
Unadjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	41,690	42,120	41,190	-1.0%	1.2%
Unemployment	1,920	1,770	1,960	8.5%	-2.0%
% of Labor Force Unemployed	4.6	4.2	4.8		
Total Employment	39,770	40,350	39,230	-1.4%	1.4%
JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK					
Nonfarm Payroll Jobs**	33,640	34,210	32,050	-1.7%	5.0%
Goods-Producing Industries	4,480	4,650	4,750	-3.7%	-5.7%
Mining & Construction	1,550	1,640	1,870	-5.5%	-17.1%
Manufacturing	2,930	3,010	2,880	-2.7%	1.7%
Service-Producing Industries	29,160	29,560	27,300	-1.4%	6.8%
Transportation, Comm., & Utilities	1,940	1,920	1,950	1.0%	-0.5%
Wholesale Trade	1,450	1,440	1,450	0.7%	0.0%
Retail Trade	7,320	7,450	7,110	-1.7%	3.0%
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	1,490	1,480	1,440	0.7%	3.5%
Services	8,200	8,130	7,040	0.9%	16.5%
Government Administration	3,480	3,460	3,400	0.6%	2.4%
Government Education	5,280	5,680	4,910	-7.0%	7.5%

*Preliminary Estimate

**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

nock County.

As shown in Southeast Table 1, the number of *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* fell by 570 between November and December 2000. Seasonal conditions can have a huge affect on jobs during December, and may not follow the same pattern year after year. Since the number of jobs is counted during the week of the 12th of the month, conditions may vary dramatically during December and can cause fluctuations in the number of jobs. Schools always have a long holiday break during December and January, but whether the number of jobs change significantly depends when the break occurs. If school is out during the week of the 12th of December, then the number of jobs drops dramatically. If school is in session sometime during the week of the 12th of December, then the number of jobs remains fairly constant. Weather and economic factors can also affect the number of jobs in December. During years of high snowfall, the number of jobs usually goes up in December. Additional jobs are created in government because of snow removal and road maintenance and in recreation because of jobs at ski resorts. Economic factors usually affect the number of *Retail Trade* jobs during December. *Retail Trade* jobs generally increase in November in preparation for the holiday shopping season. If holiday shopping is robust, those jobs usually remain through December. But, if holiday shopping does not meet expectations, those jobs will generally be eliminated before the December job count.

Seasonal factors drove the number of *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* down in December 2000 from November 2000. Most of the decreases occurred in *Government Education*

Southeast Idaho Table 2: Unemployment Rates

County	<i>Seasonally Adjusted</i>		
	December		
	2000	2000	1999
Bannock	4.6	4.5	4.7
Bear Lake	6.1	5.3	5.5
Bingham	5.2	4.4	4.3
Caribou	7.2	5.5	5.4
Franklin	3.7	3.6	2.9
Oneida	3.8	3.4	3.3
Power	7.2	6.8	5.4

because schools closed for the holidays, temporarily eliminating 400 jobs. But the remarkable decrease was in *Retail Trade*, which dropped 130 jobs in December.

The *Goods-Producing Industries, Construction and Manufacturing*, split the decline of 170 jobs in December. This is a normal pattern for this time of year because cold weather delays new construction projects and food-processing manufacturing typically drops after the busy fall season. From one year ago, *Goods-Producing Industries'* jobs declined 5.7 percent, a loss of 270 jobs between December 1999 and December 2000. All job reductions were in *Construction*, which lost 320 jobs from last December. Some of the job reductions occurred because colder weather in December 2000 prevented construction activity. *Manufacturing* gained 50 jobs this December over December 1999.

The *Service-Producing Industries—Transportation, Communications & Utilities, Trade, Finance, Insurance & Real Estate, Services, and Government*—dropped 530 jobs from November to December 2000 because of declines in *Government Education* (400) and *Retail Trade* (130). *Government Education* declined in December because schools closed earlier for the holidays this year than last year. *Retail Trade* jobs jumped dramatically in October and November because of the opening of the new Fred Meyer Super Center and Walmart's expansion to a super store. In November, jobs in *Retail Trade* increased again as stores prepared for the holiday shopping season. By December, the biggest flurry of activity at the new super stores had begun to settle, retailers had experienced a slower holiday shopping pattern, and jobs were reduced. From one year ago, *Service-Producing Industries'* jobs increased 6.8 percent, a gain of 1,860 jobs between December 1999 and December 2000. Jobs increased in all service-producing sectors except *Transportation, Communications & Utilities. Services* increased the most at 16.5 percent and added 1,160 jobs. Most *Services* job growth occurred because of new jobs at Convergys' Call Center and increased use of temporary staffing agencies.

AREA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS

Bannock County

- Pocatello hosted about 1,200 people at the 33rd annual University of Idaho Potato Conference. The two-day conference provides enhanced knowledge of the potato industry to growers, processors, and organizations.
- R Homes Corporation, of Pocatello, closed its business in December and eliminated 40 jobs. The business filed for bankruptcy in January.
- Union Pacific Railroad eliminated 14 jobs in its Pocatello locomotive department in January. According to railroad officials, the job reductions occurred because of indications of a nationwide economic slowdown.

Bingham County

- Blackfoot will celebrate its 100th year as an incorporated city in 2001. The city has several activities planned throughout the year. Centennial activities officially kicked off January 16, the date Blackfoot be-

came incorporated, when Mayor Reece proclaimed 2001 the year of centennial observances in Blackfoot.

- Potato Management Company, a spin-off of the Potato Growers of Idaho, has been established to manage the year 2000 potato surplus. The organizations primary goal is to help raise the low price of potatoes. In an effort to bring the price of potatoes up to at least their production costs, about 250 potato growers have agreed to give up to 10 percent of their potatoes to a diversion program.

Franklin County

- The Franklin County Library Board unveiled plans for a new library to be built in Preston. The facility will be 8,700-square feet in size and will cost about \$900,000. The board hopes to begin construction this spring.
- Nyoplast America, Inc. of Atlanta, Georgia announced its plan to sell Preston's Head Manufacturing. The company manufactures PVC fittings and employs approximately 40 people. Nyoplast officials say the parent company, Nyoplast NV of the Netherlands, is overextended by operations in the United States and needs to concentrate on its European operations.

Oneida County

- L.W. Miller Transportation, Incorporated purchased Dano's Chevron in Malad. The new owners will keep the current employees of the business and people will see minimal changes in its operation. The gas station/convenience store's name will change to L.W.'s Chevron and diesel service will be added next spring.

Power County

- Construction work continues on the new high school and assisted living center in American Falls. Over the last few months, underground work has been done at the high school site. Currently, floors are being poured and the brick walls are being constructed. Exterior work is being completed on the new assisted living center, including brickwork and roofing. The assisted living center is expected to open in the spring of 2001.

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